

What is claimed is:

1. A method of synchronizing directory information stored on a central computer system and a copy of said directory information stored on a second remote electronic system, the method comprising the steps of:

determining whether any changes have occurred with the said directory information stored on the said central computer system and storing said changes in a log file;

determining which second remote electronic system requires said directory changes;

connecting said central computer system to said second remote electronic system with a data communications link;

sending an electronic mail message from said central computer system to said remote electronic system, on said data communications link, with notification of the presence of said log file;

sending confidential information in said electronic mail message detailing how to retrieve said log file.

2. The method of claim 1 wherein said remote electronic system further comprising the steps of:

receiving said electronic mail notification and verifying that said electronic mail was sent by said central computer system;

receiving said electronic mail notification and verifying that said electronic mail was not modified after being sent by said central computer system;

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determining a time to retrieve said log file from said central computer system using said confidential information in said electronic mail message.

3. The method of claim 2 further comprising the steps of:

accessing securely the said central computer system on said communications link, using said confidential information in said electronic mail notification;

retrieving said log file by means of said communications data link storing said log file on remote electronic system;

disconnecting from said central computer system on said data communications link;

updating said directory information on said remote electronic system using said retrieved log file;

notifying said central computer system that said remote electronic system updated its directory information using said log file and notifying said central computer system of any errors encountered during the update;

notifying user of said remote electronic system that changes have been applied to copy of directory information stored on said electronic system.

4. The method of claim 1 wherein said communications link is the Internet or a company's private computer network.

5. The method of claim 1 wherein said confidential information is encrypted so that only the said remote electronic system and said central computer system can decrypt the said confidential information.

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6. The method of claim 3 wherein said secure accessing of said central computer system by said remote electronic system is by means of the Secure Sockets Layer technology.
7. A method of synchronizing catalog information stored on a central computer system and a copy of said catalog information stored on a second remote electronic system, the method comprising the steps of:
- determining whether any changes have occurred with the said catalog information stored on the said central computer system and storing said changes in a log file;
 - determining which second remote electronic system requires said catalog changes;
 - connecting said central computer system to said second remote electronic system with a data communications link;
 - sending an electronic mail message from said central computer system to said remote electronic system, on said data communications link, with notification of the presence of said log file;
 - sending confidential information in said electronic mail message detailing how to retrieve said log file.
8. The method of claim 7 wherein said remote electronic system further comprising the steps of:
- receiving said electronic mail notification and verifying that said electronic mail was sent by said central computer system;
 - receiving said electronic mail notification and verifying that said electronic mail was not modified after being sent by said central computer system;

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determining a time to retrieve said log file from said central computer system using said confidential information in said electronic mail message.

9. The method of claim 8 further comprising the steps of:

accessing securely the said central computer system on said communications link, using said confidential information in said electronic mail notification;

retrieving said log file by means of said communications data link storing said log file on remote electronic system;

disconnecting from said central computer system on said data communications link;

updating said catalog information on said remote electronic system using said retrieved log file;

notifying said central computer system that said remote electronic system updated its catalog information using said log file and notifying said central computer system of any errors encountered during the update;

notifying user of said remote electronic system that changes have been applied to copy of catalog information stored on said electronic system.

10. The method of claim 7 wherein said communications link is the Internet or a company's private computer network.

11. The method of claim 7 wherein said confidential information is encrypted so that only the said remote electronic system and said central computer system can decrypt the said confidential information.

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12. The method of claim 9 wherein said secure accessing of said central computer system by said remote electronic system is by means of the Secure Sockets Layer technology.

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